

New US Strategy in Central Asia

News:

US Department of State published the new Central Asia Strategy. The document was published on the department's website. The strategy was presented to the region's foreign ministers during a visit to Tashkent by US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. According to the document, cooperation with Central Asia in the fight against terrorism and extremism will continue, including through joint work with law enforcement agencies and border services. According to the State Department, the United States allocated more than \$90 million to strengthen the region's border security and personnel training. The new strategy implies 6 basic principles of US policy in the region:

1. Supporting and strengthening the sovereignty and independence of the countries of Central Asia both individually and in the region as a whole.
2. Reducing terrorist threats in Central Asia.
3. Expansion and support for stability in Afghanistan.
4. Promoting interaction between Central Asia and Afghanistan.
5. Promoting rule of law and human rights reform.
6. Promoting US investment in Central Asia.

Comment:

Recall that on the 2nd of February head of the US Department of State Mike Pompeo during his tour to some Central Asian countries told to reporters: ***"We want prosperity for Central Asia. We want every country in Central Asia to be independent and sovereign, and not a beggar or vassal of another state in the region"***. What can be interpreted just as a desire of the United States to become a new overlord in the region instead of Russia.

It is noteworthy that the last large-scale tour of the US Secretary of State was in the fall of 2015, when John Kerry introduced the new C5+1 format (Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan + USA), which was designed to restore America's lost influence in the region. By that time, American influence in Central Asia was practically nullified, while the complete political dominance of Russia was established, and Chinese economic expansion began to gain serious momentum.

Since that time the C5+1 format continued to exist but did not change the alignment of forces in the region at all, leaving the United States, which were concentrated on events in the Middle East, without serious leverage in the region.

Analysts see these steps of the United States as an attempt to reanimate an abandoned format, breathing new life into it, and also to make a second attempt to regain the US influence.

It is worth mentioning an important trend: no matter how much the United States and Russia compete for influence in the region, but they are unanimous in one thing - the need of suppression of the Islamic revival. Therefore, since the 90s of the last century, they were unanimous about the establishment of power by cruel dictators, whose mission was to prevent the Islamization of the region. Therefore, we will find that each of the colonial powers that has ambitions in the region, whether Russia or the US, focuses on the fight against the so-called "radicalism, extremism and terrorism."

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